
EXAMPLE VOW RENEWAL CEREMONY

A CEREMONY FOR A COUPLE'S RENEWING OF THEIR MARRIAGE VOWS

Context: This is a simple ceremony, involving just the couple, Sally and Ian, and the minister, in which both partners remember and recommit the vows that they made to each other at their wedding. A blessing is also given, asking for their continued growth together.

Preparation: The basic format of the ceremony, together with any preferences for poems or readings, will have been previously discussed with the couple. If necessary, the couple's vows will have been remembered and written down. A simple altar may be set up as a focus for the exchange of vows. A lightly tied ribbon is also provided, being used in the ceremony to symbolise the deep connection between the couple.

Welcome and introductory prayer: Great Almighty God of our understanding, Thank you for bringing us together today for this precious time of remembering and recommitting. May we be open to Your awesome power and loving kindness in our simple ceremony. Amen.

Minister: Thank you, Sally and Ian, for being here. Your vows, taken many years ago, are as sincerely meant today as they were on the day you were married. I'd like to invite you, if you feel able, to just take a moment of silence, closing your eyes if you wish, to bring to mind and in your heart that moment in [place of wedding's name] where you first spoke these words to each other.

Moment of silence for reflection.

Poem, read by Minister (or one of the couple if preferred):

I give you my promise
By Clive Johnson

These vows we formed with serious hearts,
Knowing the power of our hearts leading.
Together, we have come a long way
Since we first set eyes upon each other
And we have travelled far since we gave each other
Our deepest promises.

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Today we celebrate our love again,
By setting a fresh seal on our most precious intentions.
Grace to you my love, I give you my promise.

Brief address by minister.

Minister: Now we come to the moment of recommitting your vows to each other. Please can you turn to look at each other, holding each other's hands, and then in turn say your vow (if preferred, this can take the form of repeating the Minister's reading of the vows, or the Minister can hold a written script for each partner to read from).

Exchange of vows.

Prayer, led by the minister: Thank you, dear ones, for opening your hearts, for what you are and what you give to each other. May your heartfelt words be honoured and acknowledged, and may you continue to grow in your beautiful partnership. Amen.

Symbol of bonding: I now invite each of you to hold out an arm to receive the binding of this ribbon. Together by the same chord you are inseparably linked to each other.

The partner standing to the left side of altar holds out their right arm and the partner to the right their left. The minister gently places the ribbon around each of their wrists. This isn't tightly bound, to allow the ribbon to be easily slipped off after the ceremony and kept by the couple if they wish.

Blessing: May you continue to be blessed through all the days of your life. May you grow in friendship and love. May you nurture each other and nourish each other. May you be protected and guided. May you know the love and protection of God, whoever or whatever you believe Him or Her to be. Amen.

Closing prayer, led by minister: Dear Great Spirit, Thank you for bringing these two special people together and for cementing their precious relationship over many years. As they have opened themselves to each other, committing again their intentions and promises that honour their support and love for each other, bless their growing partnership together, that it may grow with strength, courage and protection. Bless this beautiful couple. Amen.